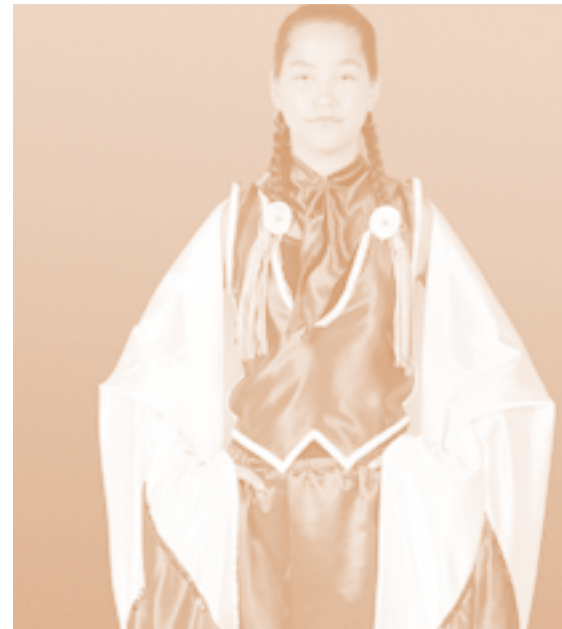


# Minority Health Facts

## NATIVE AMERICANS in Rhode Island



### INTRODUCTION

This report provides information about major health indicators for the Native American/American Indian population in the state, hereafter referred to as Rhode Island's "Native American" population. A Native American/American Indian is defined by the Office of Management and Budget (Directive 15) as a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural affiliation through tribal affiliation or community recognition. A White person is defined as a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.

This report presents data on socio-economic characteristics, morbidity and mortality, behavioral risks, infectious diseases, maternal and child health, and access to healthcare among Native American Rhode Islanders in comparison to the White non-Hispanic, and the overall state populations. Please note that race and ethnic status for some Health Department data are based on self-identification.

### POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census 2005 American Community Survey, there are 10,725 Native Americans or Alaskan Natives living in Rhode Island. This information on tribes is based on self-identification and includes federally- or state-recognized tribes, as well as bands and clans. While there are nearly 100 reported tribes in Rhode Island, the Narragansett Indian tribe has the largest number of members at 2,389. According to these figures, about 0.9% of the total population is Native American. It is estimated that over 60% of the urban Native American population lives in Providence County. The median age for the Native American population is 26 years, whereas the overall state median is 38 years. Over 82% of the Native American population is age 50 or less, while 70.2% of the overall state population is age 50 or less.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The following are socio-economic characteristics of Rhode Island's Native American population from the 2000 Census. These characteristics may affect the health of Native American Rhode Islanders.

- The percentage of Native Americans living below poverty is over three times higher than the overall state population, and almost five times higher than the White population.
- The median household income for Native Americans is \$22,800—\$21,700 less than the state median and \$22,500 less than the White population.
- A lower percentage of Native Americans graduate from high school compared to the overall state and the White populations.
- A greater percentage of Native Americans are unemployed compared to the overall state and the White populations.

**Table A: Socio-Economic Data**

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON- HISPANIC)	STATE
Percentage of population living below poverty <sup>1</sup>	39.0	7.9	11.9
Percentage of population that is unemployed <sup>2</sup>	6.5	3.1	3.6
Median household income <sup>3</sup>	\$22.8k <sup>4</sup>	\$45.3k	\$44.5k
High School graduation rate <sup>5</sup> (percent)	76.0	88.0	85.0

SOURCES: <sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; 1999 data.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; 2000 data.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; 2001 estimates.

<sup>4</sup>Only 2000 estimate available.

<sup>5</sup>RI Kids Count Factbook, 2006; 2005 data.

## MORTALITY

- For the period between 2000-2004, the three leading causes of death for Native Americans were heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. While diabetes is ranked as the third leading cause of death for the Native American population, diabetes is not ranked among the top five causes of death for the White or the overall state populations.

## BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTORS

- Native Americans have a similar percentage of overweight or obese individuals compared to the White and the overall state populations. When only the obese percentages are presented, Native Americans show a higher percentage of obese individuals compared to the White and the overall state populations, however.
- The percentage of Native Americans who smoke cigarettes is over two times higher than the White and the overall state populations.
- A slightly higher percentage of Native Americans engage in binge-drinking than the overall state population and the White populations.

Table B: Leading Causes of Death, 2000-2004

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON-HISPANIC)	STATE
1	Heart disease	Heart disease	Heart disease
2	Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
3	Diabetes	Stroke	Stroke
4	Stroke	Chronic respiratory diseases	Chronic respiratory diseases
5	+	Pneumonia/influenza	Pneumonia/influenza

SOURCE: RI Dept. of Health, Division of Vital Records, RI Resident Deaths, ICD-10 Codes, 2000-2004.  
+Sample too small for meaningful analysis.

Table C: Behavioral Risk Factor Indicators

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON-HISPANIC)	STATE
Percentage of adult population <sup>1</sup> that participates in light to moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day (2001, 2003, 2005)	+	51.4	49.8
Percentage of adult population that is overweight <sup>2</sup> (20 yrs+) (2000-2005)	29.2	38.4	38.2
Percentage of adult population that is obese <sup>3</sup> (20 yrs+) (2002-2005)	29.4	19.2	19.6
Percentage of adult population that consumes at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables per day (2002, 2003, 2005)	24.3	27.9	27.5
Percentage of adult population that smokes cigarettes (2002-2005)	47.5	21.6	21.4
Percentage of adult population that consumed 5+ drinks on one or more occasions in past month (binge-drinking) (2002-2005)	24.3	17.4	17.2

SOURCE: RI Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.  
<sup>1</sup>Adult population refers to individuals 18 years and older unless otherwise specified.  
<sup>2</sup>Overweight defined by CDC as BMI ≥ 25 to < 30.  
<sup>3</sup>Obesity defined by CDC as BMI ≥ 30.  
+Sample too small for meaningful analysis.



**Table D: Incidence Rates of Infectious Diseases:  
Cases per 100,000 Population**

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON- HISPANIC)	STATE
Gonorrhea <sup>1</sup>	+	21.3	41.8
Chlamydia <sup>1</sup>	+	133.5	311.8
Tuberculosis <sup>2</sup>	0	2.0	4.5
HIV <sup>3</sup>	+	6.1	17.2

SOURCES: RI Dept. of Health, Office of Communicable Diseases

<sup>1</sup>Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Surveillance Data 2005.

<sup>2</sup>Tuberculosis Database 2005.

<sup>3</sup>HIV/AIDS Surveillance Data 2005.

+Sample too small for meaningful analysis.

**Table E: Maternal and Child Health Indicators**

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON- HISPANIC)	STATE
Percentage of pregnant women with delayed prenatal care <sup>1</sup>	19.2	8.6	9.9
Rate of births to teens ages 15-19 (per 1,000 teens) <sup>1</sup>	149.0	30.0	31.0
Percentage of births to mothers with less than 12 years of education <sup>1</sup>	32.6	13.9	15.2
Percentage of infants with low birth weight (<5.5 lbs.) <sup>1</sup>	12.3	7.4	8.0
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) <sup>2</sup>	7.8	5.6	6.4
Percentage of children in poverty (<18 yrs.) <sup>3</sup>	43.0	12.0	19.5

SOURCES: <sup>1</sup>RI Dept. of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2001-2005.

<sup>2</sup>Infant Mortality Database, 2001-2005.

<sup>3</sup>RI Kids Count Factbook 2006; 2005 data.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

- During 2005, there were no known cases of tuberculosis among Native Americans in Rhode Island.
- Due to the small population of Native Americans in Rhode Island, the available statistics on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS are too limited to report reliably.

## MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

- The overall state and the White populations have more favorable maternal and child health outcome indicators than the Native American population in Rhode Island.
- Native Americans are about twice as likely to receive delayed prenatal care compared to the White or the overall state populations.
- The percentage of Native American teens (ages 15-19) who give birth is almost five times greater than the overall state or the White populations.
- The percentage of Native American children who grow up in poverty is over two times greater than the overall state population and over 3.5 times greater than the White population.



# ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

- Most samples are too small to draw reliable conclusions regarding Native Americans and access to healthcare.
- The percentage of Native American adults who said there was a time when they *could not afford to see a doctor* is over two times that of the overall state population and over three times that of the White population.
- The percentage of Native Americans having no health insurance is more than double that of the overall state population and nearly three times that of the White population.

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## Table F: Access to Healthcare Indicators

	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE (NON- HISPANIC)	STATE
Percentage of adults less than 65 years old that report having no health insurance <sup>1</sup> (2002-2005)	22.7	7.6	10.5
Percentage of adults that report having no specific source of ongoing healthcare <sup>1</sup> (2000-2001)	+	14.2	15.6
Percentage of population (all ages) stating usual source of care as none or emergency room <sup>2</sup> (2000-2001)	+	4.6	4.9
Percentage of women aged 40+ that report receiving a mammogram in the past 2 yrs <sup>1,3</sup> (2001, 2002, 2004)	+	90.0	90.1
Percentage of women that reported having a pap test in the past 3 yrs <sup>1,3</sup> (2001, 2002, 2004)	+	86.1	86.9
Percentage of adults that said "yes" when asked if there was a time they could not afford to see a doctor <sup>1</sup> (2003-2005)	25.1	7.5	9.3

SOURCES: <sup>1</sup>RI Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

<sup>2</sup>RI Health Interview Survey.

<sup>3</sup>The denominator includes only women who have ever been screened.

+Sample too small for meaningful analysis.

## For more information regarding minority health and the statistics contained in this report, please contact:

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